

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

**SAU 21**

**John Bourgoin, Superintendent**

**Special Education Directors**

**Michelle Langa, Hampton**

**Laurie Glode, Hampton Falls**

**Kathleen Linn, North Hampton**

**Diana Pietrowski, Seabrook**

**Cynthia Whitney, South Hampton**

**Linda Titus, Winnacunnet Cooperative**

**Final Copy**

**January 12, 1999**

**Visit Conducted on:  
October 28 and 29, 1998**

**Team Members:**

Maryclare Heffernan, Chairperson

Debra Grabill, State Consultant

Paul Borsh

Katherine Clarcq

Jason Dufoe

Jane Hoover

Kevin Leonard

Dawn Peck

Ronald Snyder

Robert Wells

David Bunjo

Linda Couture

George Hails

John Joyce

Alan Pardy

Tim Quinney

Audrey Stage

Debbie White

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

## **Table of Contents**

- I. Introduction
- II. Status of Corrective Actions from Previous On-Site
- III. Issues of Significance
- IV. Citations to the New Hampshire Standards for the Education of  
Students With Disabilities  
  
(Commendations, Citations, and Suggestions for each school)

Note: *It should be noted that suggestions are not considered corrective actions and therefore are given as technical assistance. The district is not mandated to implement them.*

# **New Hampshire Special Education Program Approval Report**

## **SAU 21, HAMPTON, SEABROOK, HAMPTON FALLS, WINNACUNNET COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

A New Hampshire Department of Education Special Education Program Approval visit was conducted at SAU 21 comprised of the following schools: Marston School, Centre School, Hampton Academy Junior High School, Lincoln Ackerman School, North Hampton School, Seabrook Elementary School, Barnard School, Winnacunnet Cooperative School District. The visiting team met on October 28 - 29, 1998 in order to review the status of Special Education services being provided to eligible students.

Activities related to this evaluation included the close review of all the teaching certifications of special education staff, analysis of SPEDIS data and random inspection of student records. Interviews were held with the special education director, building principals, regular and special education teachers, related service personnel and administrators as time and availability permitted. In addition, the team conducted parent interviews via phone. Throughout the visit the team had full cooperation from the school personnel and this helpfulness was greatly appreciated.

The report that you are about to read represents the consensus of all the members of the visiting team. Please keep in mind that this is a "report for exception", meaning that only exceptions to the NH State Standards have been addressed. If a component is not mentioned, that does not mean that the team did not review it; it just means that there were no citations of noncompliance to the Standards found in that particular area.

### **II. STATUS OF PREVIOUS ON-SITE:** *Conducted on January 13 - 14, 1994*

Based on review of the previous program approval report and the findings of the team that visited all schools within the SAU 21 School District, it was the consensus that the district has made a serious effort to address the citations from the previous on-site. The SAU is in the process of adopting new special education forms that address all aspects of the special education process. The consistency provided by utilizing the same paperwork should offer improvements in any procedural areas where the team identified issues of non-compliance. Also, the transitions from school to school should be made smoother by any efforts toward consistency in procedure and programming. The visiting team did find a range in organization of special education student records that varied from building to building. The same inconsistency was noted during the previous on-site visit and the same suggestion to coordinate a record keeping system is again suggested. Another previous suggestion worth revisiting is for SAU wide resources to be considered and shared programming be developed to accommodate the low incidence populations.

The previous team noted a high quality of special education programming in general throughout SAU 21 and this team found the same quality to exist today. The SAU staff is commended for their professionalism and for their efforts toward providing such high quality programs to all of the district's students. The evidence of both district and building level leadership is apparent and should be mentioned as an important factor in the successful educational practices found in this SAU.

### **III. ISSUES OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

The visiting team found no SAU wide issues of significance. The work SAU 21 is doing toward developing quality special education programming for it's disabled students is impressive. There is a clear commitment to providing appropriate services in an inclusionary environment whenever appropriate. The efforts made since the previous on-site visit indicate a high level of interest on the part of staff to continue to seek programming solutions for all students and in all settings along the continuum of services. As a result, the students identified as requiring special education services are provided with a generally high quality of programming.

There is a sense of autonomy among the various school districts within SAU 21. The individual communities represent a range of student educational needs and issues. And, while it is understandable that different needs may warrant a variety of educational approaches, it is suggested that the SAU consider the addition of an SAU wide special education administrator who could provide the assurance of consistency where it is most beneficial, and leadership in developing future philosophical and programming direction.

There is presently, a strong communication link among the Special Education Directors. They meet regularly to share information and address common special education issues. They have instituted new forms in response to the citations from the previous visit. As a result, the visiting team found relatively few specific areas of district wide non-compliance. The Special Education Directors have also begun efforts to address the IDEA Revisions of 1997. These activities include the provision of inservice training for all special education staff and training for the Leadership Team of SAU 21. They have also revised the Individual Education Plan forms, Written Prior Notice, Three-Year Re-evaluation Notice and Procedures, as well as the procedures for pre-evaluation meetings. Further, they have emphasized the role of parents in each phase of the special education process. These proactive efforts to comply with the reauthorization of IDEA are to be commended.

#### **IV. COMMENDATIONS, CITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS: SAU WIDE**

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** All

##### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- The SAU staff is to be commended for their professionalism and the obvious commitment to the provision of quality educational services for all students.
- The Superintendent of Schools is commended for his efforts in encouraging a system-wide consistency in programming; for his interest in the connection of Individual Education Plans to student outcome and for his philosophy regarding the development of a plan to identify the role of NHEIAP scores in determining the effectiveness of special education programming.
- The SAU has made a clear commitment to providing safe, well maintained physical facilities for all of the District's students. In all cases, the school buildings are clean and attractive.
- The SAU's Special Education Directors are commended for their efforts toward complying with the IDEA Amendments through training initiatives and revised procedures and forms.
- The SAU's Special Education Directors are commended for their ongoing efforts to meet regularly to create consistency and seek a high level of quality among all special education programs.
- The SAU's educators are commended for their ongoing interest in seeking solutions to programming needs for all students. The collaboration among staff was evident in all schools and indicates a willingness toward shared resources and ongoing improvements in service delivery.
- Parents are involved in parent organizations and are active partners in their child's education.

##### **CITATIONS:** (in numerical order)

(None)

##### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- Consider the development of programming that would address the needs of low incidence populations and would utilize shared resources within the SAU. (i.e., programming for emotionally disabled or autistic students.)
- Consider creating an SAU-wide Director of Special Education position in an effort to seek greater consistency in programming and to lead the SAU in developing future program goals and direction.
- Continue to seek connections between the general education curriculum and the outcomes for students identified as having special education needs.

Centre School
---------------

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:**

Modified Program, Speech and Language Therapy, Learning Lab

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The school staff is commended for their successful efforts toward developing an inclusionary model.
- Special education and general education teachers meet regularly to plan for programming and to discuss individual student needs.
- The pre-referral Teacher Assistance Team Program model in place at Centre School is to be commended.
- The building principal is commended for his support of the present special education models in place at Centre School and also for his interest in developing further programming for the more severely involved students. He is also commended for his interest in connecting SAU curriculum with the New Hampshire Curriculum Frameworks.
- The Special Education Director is commended for providing inservice training and for her work toward developing consistency in all special education procedures.
- The school staff is commended for their efforts to include parents in all aspects of the special education process. Parents interviewed expressed satisfaction with the school programs at Centre School.

**CITATIONS:**

None

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Continue the work toward the development of programming to meet the needs of the more involved population of students to extend the continuum of services.
- Continue offering inservice training in inclusionary practices and other relevant areas to all staff.
- Continue opportunities for staff to work together with other schools within the District in an attempt to provide programming consistency and to offer smooth transitions as students move from one level to another.

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Grades 3, 4, and 5 inclusionary programs

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- There is a high level of respect between staff and students that creates a caring and nurturing environment.
- The Marston staff are commended for their professionalism, high level of knowledge and the progressive instructional techniques they have developed.
- There is a highly structured environment that is conducive to successful inclusionary programming for all students, particularly for students with special education needs.
- Student files were found to be organized and in compliance.
- There is a well developed system of collaboration between the general education and special education staff that lends itself well to the overall delivery of services for all students.
- There is evidence of parent participation in the school community.

**CITATIONS:**

Ed # 1109.04 (a)      1 file: Ten day written prior notice was not clearly documented.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

None

Pre-School Program, Marston School
------------------------------------

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Pre-School Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The inclusive classroom is designed to offer all necessary support for students within the structure of regular programming.
- The staff are professional and highly knowledgeable about the educational needs of this early childhood population. They are well organized which allows for a team based approach to the identification of educational needs and the development of individual program plans.
- The instruction offered is progressive and includes successful behavioral strategies.
- The environment within the preschool program is highly nurturing.
- There is a good student to staff ratio.

**CITATIONS:**

None

**SUGGESTIONS:**



## Hampton Academy Junior High School

### **PROGRAM(S) VISITED: Modified Regular, Emotionally Handicapped, Severe Disability**

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

- There is good communication between staff members, exemplified in the efforts of general and special educators to meet at least weekly to discuss student needs and develop student program plans.
- The school staff is commended for their efforts toward developing a successful inclusionary model for all students.
- There appears to be a well developed continuum of services in an attempt to meet the range of student educational needs.
- There is a good student to staff ratio.
- The building is well maintained and has a cheerful and welcoming atmosphere.
- There is good access to technology for all students.
- The secretarial staff are professional and helpful.
- The staff are commended for their work toward addressing the new IDEA amendments.
- The school administration and staff are commended for their professionalism and willingness to continue working toward new program developments and solutions.

### **CITATIONS:**

<u>Ed# 1107.08 (c )</u>	1 file: No student observation found in record.
<u>Ed# 1123.04</u>	1 file: There is no evidence of a record of disclosure.
<u>Ed# 1107.03 (d)</u>	1 file: There is no evidence of an academic evaluation.
<u>Ed# 1107.05 (k)</u>	1 file: There is no evidence that the evaluation was completed within 45 days or that an extension was signed by parent.
<u>Ed# 1107.06</u>	1 file: There is no evidence of a written evaluation summary.
<u>Ed# 1107.07( c )1,2,3</u>	1 file: There is no evidence that the SEE/PT evaluation team convened.

### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- Create a consistency of special education record keeping within the SAU. This would assist in addressing the specific areas of non-compliance found in at least one of the student records reviewed.
- Continue to offer inservice training that addresses issues of collaboration and cooperative instruction at the middle school level.
- Continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the service delivery system presently in place, particularly as it relates to services offered for the more severely impaired students.
- Space needs at the Junior High School should also be considered in light of any new program development.

North Hampton School
----------------------

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Modified Regular, Resource Program, Related Services

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- There is outstanding administrative leadership evident in North Hampton.
- The school has a very caring and cohesive faculty and support personnel.
- The student records are in excellent order.
- Students are included in all activities.
- The students display a positive attitude.
- There is an exemplary program of integration in place that the North Hampton School. All IEP's reviewed are being well implemented.

**CITATIONS:**

<u>Ed# 1125.03</u>	1 file: Record did not contain evidence of complete Written Prior Notice.
Ed# 31109.01(h)	1 file: IEP did not include the length of the school day.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

None

North Hampton School Pre-School Program
---

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Pre-School Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The Pre-School program is very effective with all students working together in a well integrated setting.
- Student records were found to be in good condition.
- The pre-school program utilizes the resources of all related staff in developing individual student programs.
- The building administration is commended for their support of the pre-school program.
- The pre-school staff are professional and effective in providing services to the students.

**CITATIONS:**

None

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Continue to explore more effective use of related staff in providing services to students in the integrated pre-school setting.

Barnard School
----------------

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Modified Regular Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The staff at Barnard School are commended for their efforts toward correcting areas of non-compliance identified in the previous visit.
- There is an impressive sense of team work evident among the Barnard Staff.
- Teachers express a strong feeling of support by administration and colleagues.
- Contracted services are available to provide all related services to students.
- The teams at Barnard School begin transition planning in primary grades.
- The school staff is commended for their work in developing curriculum components in alignment with the NH Curriculum Frameworks.

**CITATIONS:**

None

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- School staff are encouraged to continue working together to identify common planning time opportunities in an effort to improve regular communication and collaboration among general and special education staff .

<b>Seabrook Elementary School</b>
-----------------------------------

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Choices Program, Resource Room Program, Modified Regular Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The special education files are well organized and well maintained.
- The staff is commended for the successful implementation and monitoring of student IEP's.
- The Special Education Director is viewed by school staff as an effective administrator.
- There is a well developed continuum of program placements and services available for all students.
- The staff is commended for the ongoing planning efforts to best utilize the Choice Program for at-risk students.
- There is a good availability of technology for students, including the Alpha Smarts word processing lap top programs.
- The elementary staff are commended for their efforts to meet at least weekly to plan for student programs.

**CITATIONS:**

<u>Ed# 1109.01 (h)</u>	3 files: The length of the school day is not stated on IEP's.
<u>Ed# 1109.04 (a)</u>	3 files: There is no evidence that parents were given a 10 day written notice of the IEP meeting.
<u>Ed# 1107.02 (a)</u>	2 files: Written notice of disposition was given to parents more than 15 days after the initial referral.
<u>Ed# 1107.05 (k)</u>	3 files: Evaluations were not completed within 45 days and there is no evidence an extension was signed.
<u>Ed# 1107.08 (d)</u>	1 file: The written report was not complete and was not signed by team members.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Staff is encouraged to begin writing measurable IEP annual goals and objectives in an effort to meet the new IDEA requirements.
- Continue inservice training in areas of special education procedures in an effort to ensure compliance with state and federal guidelines.
- Review the length of time it is taking to process special education referrals, particularly at the Junior High School level. The addition of a Pre-referral Teacher Assistance Team process may be worth considering.
- Provide ongoing inservice opportunities to all staff in an effort to continue working on collaborative and cooperative curriculum development and instructional methods.

Lincoln Akerman School
------------------------

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Resource Room Program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The Lincoln Akerman administration and staff are to be commended for the Child Study Team Model which is employed to examine and address students needs as early as possible.
- The administration and staff are to be commended for the successful development of communication models which ensure that general education teachers work closely with special education staff members to implement each student's IEP.
- The administration and staff are to be commended for their thoughtful understanding of the goals of providing special education services and the limitations of a small school when the needs of the students with complex disabilities must be considered.

**CITATIONS:**

Ed#1123.14 1 file: Did not include a record of disclosure.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Consider the need for inservice training for all staff to further identify strategies for providing services to the full range of student educational needs in an inclusionary model.
- Participate in SAU wide discussions regarding the need for further program development and staff training that would address the needs of more significantly impaired students.

<b>Winnacunnet Cooperative High School</b>
--

**PROGRAM(S) VISITED:** Self-contained programs, Developmentally Disabled program

**COMMENDATIONS:**

- The special education secretary is an asset to the overall organization and functioning of the special education programs at Winnacunnet High School.
- The school climate is good and all students are given many opportunities to participate in all aspects of the high school.
- There is evidence of excellent working relationships among the general education and special education staff. There are opportunities for team teaching and consultation.
- The Evaluation Team provides a team approach to both initial evaluations and re-evaluations.
- The programming for the DD Program, including the ABC Diner and off-campus vocational opportunities, is seen as innovative and highly effective.
- The Special Education Director has a strong, positive rapport with all of the high school staff and does an excellent job.
- The Pathways Program is commended for offering a variety of creative programming opportunities in decision making, computer skills and the arts.
- The assistant principal and other building level administration are interested in and supportive of the special education programming.
- The staff is very skilled and professional in their work.

**CITATIONS:**

None

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- Develop ongoing inservice opportunities for all staff that address issues of ADHD, methods for providing services for students who are absent from school, instructional collaboration, connection of the curriculum development to the NHEIAP scores and any other areas the staff identifies as requiring more information and planning.

# **ADDENDUM**

## **JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM**

### **SAU 21**

**Student File Review**

**Case Study Document**

**Reimbursement Claim Form**

**Case Study Addendum Form**



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>ADDENDUM</b> <b>JAMES O. MONITORING PROGRAM</b></p>
---

**SAU 21**

**CITATIONS:**

<u>Ed# 1109.01 ( c )</u>	1 file: IEP does not indicate that team considered the extent of participation in regular class.
<u>Ed# 1109.01 (d)</u>	1 file: IEP does not include expectations of student for regular class participation.
<u>Ed# 1109.01 (h)</u>	1 file: IEP does not include length of school year and length of school day.
<u>Ed 1109.01 (k)</u>	1 file: IEP does not include statement of party assuming financial responsibility.
<u>Ed# 1109.01 (l)</u>	1 file: IEP does not include statement of transition services.
<u>Ed# 1109.01 (m)</u>	1 file: IEP does not include statement regarding needed transition services.
<u>Ed# 1111.01 (e)(l)</u>	1 file: There is no evidence that ESY was considered.
<u>Ed# 1107.08(a)(2)</u>	1 file: There is no student observation in file.
<u>Ed# 1129.05(a)(8)</u>	1 file: The Annual Statement of Program is not signed by the LEA representative.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

- The district is encouraged to add their own IEP cover page to any revised Individual Education Plan agreed upon when students are court ordered to a private out-of-district facility. The consistency provided by using the SAU's IEP format would ensure the appropriate procedures are followed and all components are included.